

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SUVA 00829 182352Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
ACDA-12 IO-13 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00
XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /118 W
-----023613 192021Z /70

R 172050Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7413

USLO PEKING

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP, PGOV, FJ

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO SOUTH KOREA AND PRC

REF: SUVA 0686

1. ROK AMBASSADOR HAN LIM LEE, RESIDENT IN CANBERRA, CALLED ON ME 17 MAY DURING HIS SECOND VISIT TO SUVA SINCE HIS ACCREDITATION TO FIJI LAST JUNE. HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT AS ON HIS PREVIOUS VISIT HE WILL BE UNABLE TO SEE PRIME MINISTER RATU MARA WHO IS PRESENTLY INVOLVED IN THE GREAT COUNCIL OF CHIEF'S MEETING HE IS HOSTING IN HIS HOME BASE ISLAND OF LAKEBA. THIS BROUGHT US TO THE QUESTION OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO SEOUL FOR 7 JUNE TO BE FOLLOWED BY A VISIT TO CHINA 11 - 17 JUNE.

2. SEEING THAT HAN HAD NOT FOCUSSED VERY MUCH ON THE PM'S VISIT DESPITE THE FACT THAT HE SAID THAT HE HOPED TO ACCOMPANY HIM OR OTHERWISE BE IN SEOUL FOR THE VISIT, I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUGGEST TO HIM THAT RATU MARA IS INTERESTED IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERALLY AGRICULTURE
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PAGE 02 SUVA 00829 182352Z

AND THAT HE WOULD PROBABLY EXPECT TO BE SHOWN SUCH PROJECTS IN SOUTH KOREA HAVING EXPRESSED THE SAME DESIRE TO HIS PRC HOSTS. I EMPHASIZED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO SELECT CAREFULLY THE PROJECTS TO BE SHOWN TO THE PM BECAUSE HE CAN BE COUNTED UPON TO MAKE COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RESULTS OBTAINED IN A FREE MARKET ECONOMY AND THOSE IN A COLLECTIVIST ECONOMY LIKE IN CHINA.

3. HAN'S INTEREST PICKED UP WHICH ENABLED ME TO DRAW A PROFILE OF RATU MARA AS A POLITICAL LEADER OF SOME INTERNATIONAL STANDING EXCEEDING THAT OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF A SMALL ISLAND COUNTRY LIKE FIJI. I POINTED OUT THAT ROK SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF VISIT TO HELP RATU MARA GET A FIRST HAND UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPRESSIVE ECONOMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SOUTH KOREA AND NOT ASSUME THAT THIS SHOULD BE KNOWN TO THE FIJIAN PRIME MINISTER OR THAT HIS KNOWLEDGE AND APPRECIATION OF THEM ARE NOT OF GREAT IMPORTANCE.

2. AMBASSADOR HAN REPEATED EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION FOR THE SUGGESTIONS ABOVE BUT LEFT A LINGERING DOUBT IN MY MIND AS TO WHETHER HE WILL GO ALL OUT TO MAKE A DETERMINED EFFORT TO INFLUENCE THE PROGRAM FOR RATU MARA'S VISIT TO SEOUL. EMBASSY SEOUL MAY WISH TO CONSIDER THE ADVISABILITY OF TALKING TO MOF ALONG THE LINES SUGGESTED ABOVE. THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT RATU MARA WILL BE COMPARING ROK AND PRC AS FAR AS RURAL DEVELOPMENT IS CONCERNED.
CONDON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SUVA00829
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780212-0018
Format: TEL
From: SUVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780547/aaaabodc.tel
Line Count: 84
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 17ddb39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SUVA 686
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2658898
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO SOUTH KOREA AND PRC
TAGS: OVIP, PGOV, FJ, KS, CH, (MARA, KAMISESE)
To: SEOUL
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/17ddb39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014